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JEWISH COMMUNITY FEDERATION
OF GREATER ROCHESTER

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PRESS RELEASE

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“COUNT ME IN”: 2010 Study of Jewish Rochester Wants You!

Who are we and where do we live? What are we about in terms of Jewish life and practices? And perhaps most importantly, what do we need and want from our community?

If you consider yourself to be Jewish - by your own definition – we invite you to say, “Count Me In” to the 2010 Study of the Greater Rochester Jewish Community.

When the study kicks off in January 2010, the Greater Rochester Jewish community will be surveyed for the first time in a decade. This study’s success is dependent on each of us adding our voices to the chorus of our larger community, from Rochester to all of its suburbs, from Batavia to Geneva and Naples to Geneseo. “Count Me In” needs *you* to stand up and be counted.

The organizations serving the Greater Rochester Jewish community want to know what makes us tick. What kind of home care would make *the* difference for you, or the senior in your life, to remain independent? Do your children partake in formal Jewish education? Informal Jewish education? If you are not currently engaged in the Jewish community, is there more that could be done to welcome you?

“We’ll want to hear from everyone who considers himself or herself to be Jewish – from those who are strongly affiliated and for whom Judaism is a conscious part of daily life, to those who haven’t been actively involved or directly connected with their Judaism in

years.” said Jocelyn Goldberg-Schaible, president of the Rochester Research Group, the organization working with the Jewish Community Federation to conduct the study. “This study welcomes all to share their opinions and input. That’s what ‘Count Me In’ is all about.” To further encourage participation, everyone who completes the survey will be entered into special prize drawings.

The study, sponsored by the Federation with substantial financial support from Jewish Senior *Life*, will include several in-depth questions for those helping to make planning decisions for aging parents, as well as those planning for their own retirement needs. Additional questions will explore the needs of interfaith families, singles, teens, and other key sub-populations. And then there’s the issue of our numbers: How has the size of our community changed since our community’s last demographic study in 1999?

Study chairman **Jack Finkelstein** talks about why this study is important. “As we chart our path into the future of this community we have two choices, we can either try to predict what will be important or we can take the bold step of asking and listening to what the community wants and needs and then moving in that direction. We are creating our roadmap to the future. This survey will insure that the direction we eventually choose brings the most benefit to the community.”

The study will be conducted via the Internet, although volunteers will be available at sites in the Jewish community to assist anyone not comfortable with completing their survey online. There will also be a telephone-based option. The community will be notified by mail and email, and through flyers and advertisements, once the survey goes live.

Study Process

What’s truly unique about this study is that the listening began long before the survey was created. The Federation invited the heads of local Jewish agencies and synagogues to meet and share the questions they most need answered to plan for the future. The

questions that make up the survey will therefore be drawn directly from the needs expressed by the institutions serving the greater Rochester Jewish community.

Another key element of the study, according to Jocelyn, is that “the questions won’t merely be nice to know, but truly actionable, so that more insightful planning decisions can be made by our community, and for our community, in the years ahead.”

Volunteer Needs

Volunteers are needed to assist members of the community who want to complete the survey but need help with the computer data input. We need volunteers who are willing to interview survey respondents over the phone and input their responses using a home computer; and volunteers with laptops who are willing to meet with respondents at pre-arranged times and input their responses face to face. If you can volunteer during a 6-8 week period in January – February 2010, please contact Susan Gagnon at the Jewish Community Federation, 461-0490, ext. 242 or sgagnon@jewishrochester.org.

When the study goes live after the first of the year, we urge you to say “Count Me In”! If you have questions or concerns, contact Judy Azoff, Assistant Executive Director for Planning and Administration, 461-0490, ext. 225 or jazoff@jewishrochester.org.

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